

August 22, 2007

Dear Calvert Families,

We are off to a terrific start, thanks to the efforts of our students, staff and you! Please look for a bi-weekly letter, printed on goldenrod colored paper, to come home with your child in the Wednesday Folder. Our goal is to keep you informed about our school as we focus on our mission of ensuring that your child learns at high levels in a safe and caring environment.

**Abbott Adventures**-We made it! We are settling into our new home for the 2007-2008 school year. The facilities are working out well, and the Abbott staff has been very welcoming. Listed below are a few of the positive aspects of being at Abbott.

- ❑ While we are here, our school is being renovated!
- ❑ We have air-conditioning so we are better able to focus on learning.
- ❑ Students receive breakfast at no cost to families.
- ❑ Staff is enjoying the opportunity to see one another more frequently.
- ❑ Students seem to be energized by being in a new location.
- ❑ The P.E. and recreation facilities are top-notch.
- ❑ Students will receive tennis lessons from the Nebraska Tennis Center.

**Busing Update**-One of the major changes this year is the busing to Abbott. We thank you for taking the time to join us for our Open House last Thursday, and for all your extra efforts to see that your child gets to the bus stop and gets home safely. Overall, busing has gone smoothly; however, it has created new routines and procedures for all of us. We will make adjustments as needed to ensure a safe and pleasant ride for our students. Students, especially our younger ones, are most likely coming home a little tired. Rest and extra water are a good home remedy. Please call us with any questions or concerns.

**Bus Bags!**-All students received a “bus bag” thanks to our Parent Teacher Student/Staff Organization (PTSO). The bus bags will hold a journal, pencil and personal reading book. Calvert School supplied a spiral notebook and pencil for journaling purposes. The PTSO provided a popcorn snack that can be made at home! While students are encouraged to begin their journaling and personal reading while they are on the bus, we have not started specific routines. We hope to begin them next week. Any encouragement you can provide for positive bus behavior is appreciated.

**Normal School Hours**-will begin next week with the exception of our early release on Tuesday, August 28 so that teachers can meet in Professional Learning Communities. Our school day is 8:15 a.m. to 2:53 p.m.

**Professional Learning Communities and Early Release**-All LPS elementary and middle schools will dismiss 80 minutes early on the last Tuesday of each month except December. Our

first meeting date is Tuesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Bus routes will be adjusted accordingly, and an adjusted schedule is coming home in today's Wednesday Folder. Professional Learning Communities involve collaborative teams of teachers who focus on individual and overall student learning. The teams review individual student performance to develop timely interventions to support individual student achievement. We thank you in advance for the adjustments you will make to your schedules to support this very important work.

**Security Entrance Monitor**-As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure student safety, all Lincoln Public Schools have a Security Entrance Monitor who greets and checks in visitors to school. At Calvert you will be greeted by Jen'e Christiansen. Mrs. Christiansen has been at Calvert in other capacities for four years. She knows students, staff and many families. She is looking forward to meeting you and getting to know you better!

**School Rules and Behavior Expectations**-Calvert staff members are participating in a Nebraska State Improvement Grant that provides excellent speakers, workshops and much needed time to plan for supporting positive student behavior. Our efforts have focused on the following research based tenets.

- Teaching and supporting appropriate behavior will facilitate the academic achievement and healthy social development of all children.
- If the entire learning community (parents included) clearly understands the school rules and behavior expectations, we can make significant progress in ensuring a supportive learning environment for all students.
- Research shows that positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior supports the continuation of such behavior.

For the last several months, Calvert staff has worked to develop clear student rules and behavior expectations. This week, staff has focused on teaching our students the behavior expectations for all areas of our school. Our goal is to "catch kids being good". When students know that their positive behavior is clearly defined, recognized and reinforced, they are more likely to respond with positive behavior choices. All staff members will be handing out "Reward Tickets" to students displaying appropriate behaviors. The tickets are then placed in the classroom "fishbowl". Teachers are implementing a reward system for students when they reach classroom and/or individual goals. Please look for the "Behavior Expectations Matrix" in today's Wednesday Folder. We will continue to work on supporting student behavior, and with your help and input, we will develop a strong system of positive behavior support for students. Please let me know if you have questions.

**To Think About**-Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence. *Helen Keller*

Sincerely,

Michelle Suarez  
Principal